



Penumbra: Painting Materialising in the Almost-Shadow

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PENUMBRA

PENUMBRA

15.02—30.05.2020

F.E. MCWILLIAM GALLERY & STUDIO

SINÉAD ALDRIDGE
HANNAH CASEY-BROGAN
SUSAN CONNOLLY
SARAH DWYER
FIONA FINNEGAN
ALISON PILKINGTON
YASMINE ROBINSON
LOUISE WALLACE

INTRODUCTION

Dr Riann Coulter / F.E. McWilliam Gallery

Dr Louise Wallace / Ulster University

The F.E. McWilliam Gallery and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council are delighted to present *Penumbra*, an exhibition of contemporary painting by eight artists: Sinéad Aldridge, Hannah Casey-Brogan, Susan Connolly, Sarah Dwyer, Fiona Finnegan, Alison Pilkington, Yasmine Robinson and Louise Wallace. Co-curated by Dr Riann Coulter, F.E. McWilliam Gallery and Dr Louise Wallace, Associate Lecturer in Painting at Ulster University, *Penumbra* brings together artists who are connected by their gender, their associations with the island of Ireland and their commitment to testing the limits of painting.

As Dr Cherie Driver has pointed out in her essay in this publication, *Penumbra* can be understood in relation to a number of historical and contemporary exhibitions of Irish female artists, including most recently, *Elliptical Affinities: Irish Women Artists and the Politics of the Body 1984 to the Present*, at our cross-border partner, Highlanes Gallery, Drogheda. Like its predecessors, *Penumbra*, seeks to address the historical under-representation of women artists in museums and galleries and to shine a light on the wealth of talented contemporary female painters from Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The historical tendency for women artists to be overshadowed is particularly surprising in Ireland where pioneering female painters including Mainie Jellett, Evie Hone, Mary Swanzy and Norah McGuinness, were at the forefront of the avant-garde who introduced international modernism to Irish audiences. Today, despite the majority of art students being female, women artists are still under-represented in both the collections and exhibition schedules of many museums and galleries.

Although the artists in *Penumbra* are united by their gender, their dedication to painting in its broadest sense and their varied connections to Ireland are also significant points of connection. Whether they live here, or elsewhere, each artist and their work has been shaped by their individual relationships to place, to Ireland and to Irishness. Ultimately, these artists share a commitment to exploring and expanding the definitions of painting and to engaging in the struggle to create work that is unique, relevant and meaningful. As Louise Wallace has written:

The space of painting is difficult to occupy. The ground will pitch and shift suddenly in the studio. There is a continual fixing then unfixing of compass positions. The artists in this exhibition acknowledge painting's potential to describe terrain beyond the recognised world. We are mapping the slipping points — the flow between known and unknowable.

PENUMBRA: PAINTING MATERIALISING IN THE ALMOST-SHADOW

Dr Cherie Driver / Ulster University

The exhibition *Penumbra* can be understood in relational distance to a matrix of exhibitions of works by contemporary female artists from across the island of Ireland.¹ These exhibitions have sought to address the invisibility of such work. *Penumbra* presents us with a range of material practices that are reimagining and transgressing the terrain of what defines Ireland and broadly Irish cultural identity. This hinges upon a resurgence in concerns for the making and materiality of paint as itself the very site of meaning. All of the paintings I encountered in preparation for the writing of this essay have in their materiality delighted and greatly affected me. The contemplation of the work and the writing of this essay reverberates with the overarching proposition of the title of the exhibition itself, the astronomical term penumbra. Penumbra comes from the Latin *paene* 'almost' and *umbra* 'shadow' meaning a shaded spot or the outer part of a conical darkness cast behind a celestial object by a light source. Looking out across the penumbra, my critical lens in this essay is informed by debates on the expanded field of painting, feminist theory, psychoanalytical aesthetics and cultural and historical discourses. Through this lens traditional art historical discourses could imaginatively be thought of as large opaque celestial objects that cast a shadow into space, rendering practices that are present invisible and illegible. The works in this exhibition bring into the frame that which was always hauntingly present, located in the half-light across the penumbra. This is a vast terrain so I navigate my viewing point from a number of theoretical satellites or positions that can help locate the works not necessarily in direct contact with each other but holding a proximity in resonance and relation. A glorious constellation.

A painting is indescribable. In its material life form it encapsulates rhythmic, tacit, intuitive, spontaneous, reckless and labored making. It breathes and it performs. Painting in its materiality permeates and cuts across visual language, making it more than just a sign.² Rosemary Betterton has argued that we can understand painting as alive and relational yet encountered in times and at places. We can think of painting not as a solo 'object' but "an intersubjective process".³

All of the work in this exhibition is a visceral material encounter. There are brush strokes, marks, scratches, blocks of colour, semi-transparent layers, appendages, incisions and incorporated readymades. Some works push beyond traditional definitions of painting. The work of Susan Connolly and Yasmine Robinson foregrounds this terrain. Both practices are committed to the materiality of paint on the canvas. However, through folding in considerations of site specificity (Connolly) and the readymade (Robinson), both are an expanded conceptualisation of painting. Within the debates on the revival in painting, the first satellite here is an essay by Isabelle Graw 'The Value of Liveliness'.⁴

Graw theorises that painting as a trace of an activity evokes a subjectivity (within its own narratives and debates) that suggests agency. This is not a quasi-subject she argues but instead an indexical sign pointing to an absent author who is yet present through the surface. This specific indexicality for Graw gives it an "inner connection" to its value-form.⁵ In the expanded field of painting we can no longer see painting as located on the canvas alone, not threatening its status as medium but as Graw states, 'revitalising' and breathing new life into it.

Susan Connolly's work embodies two of these revitalising strategies. For Connolly the medium of paint is her primary source.⁶ In 'over+over&over' she uses only 3 colours; Cyan, Magenta, Lemon, to paint surfaces with an overall motif before she explores the potential of the medium to literally make its own image. Over time she has developed a method of applying paint to surfaces before removing it using a cutting (skinning) process. These works operate as paintings, both in the medium specificity and in the acts and traces of the artist's ghost as present. By expanding the intended purpose (to make an image) Connolly asks the viewer 'to trust the object (a disembodied paint skin) before them to remain as a painting'.

'Over+over&over' is reflective of Connolly's emphasis on site specificity, through curator or gallery invitation. As in previous works, light pervades upon and through the canvas, critically negotiating with the institution itself. In its materiality and site specificity the work explicitly asks how the viewer 'looks' at painting. This embodied almost performative element engages both the viewer who must navigate it and the institutional structure and conditions it critiques. This gives the work 'subject-like qualities' intervening as agent with the institution and viewer.⁷

Yasmine Robinson's work is evocative of urban landscapes where she is drawn to certain changing dynamics of space as subject and a "familiar rectangular, vacant (almost decaying) aesthetic."⁸ Robinson states "[w]hat I find compelling about these particular sites is that they can be endlessly expanded. The walls, the streets and sky act as a 'complete space' offering different compositional alternatives to the graffiti and 'street art' that usually occupy them."⁹ The work is nostalgic, invoking the tradition of landscape yet revitalising that tradition with its incorporation of readymade elements. There is a sensitivity to the revolution in modern infrastructure and virtual technology so invasive in the urban landscape. Robinson is both "rethinking space within painting, or painting as a space"¹⁰, altering the definitions of painting by folding in the "social living labor"¹¹ of the incorporating materials and/or objects. Her use of spray paint removes her mark from the surface of the painting, thereby dematerializing the painter's trace itself.

The work of Connolly and Robinson align with Graw's description of "an expanded notion of painting that captures its specificity."¹² Through these revitalising strategies, Graw would say "[t]he painting seems to have painted itself. Agency shifts from the artist to the painting."¹³

The works of Fiona Finnegan, Alison Pilkington and Sarah Dwyer also resonate within this field. The traces of materiality and activity evoke for the viewer a subjectivity within the painting suggesting a presence and an agency. This is a psychic terrain; a sense of work being both disturbing yet familiar, something that has been deeply distorted or repressed, bringing forth a sense of dread and horror. The second theoretical satellite here is an essay by Griselda Pollock, 'Does Art Think?'¹⁴ and Freud's theories of the Uncanny to consider the home and female body as a site of dread and anxiety. The paintings bring us into strange, threatening spaces through gateways, liminal gaps and passageways in Finnegan's work to strange quasi-narratives of half-life shapes in Pilkington's work to compressed, distorted and dismembered bodily forms in the work of Dwyer. We find ourselves pausing tentatively before moving forward into these boundary spaces which invoke strange and gruesome sensations full of dread.

Freud's essay on 'The Uncanny' (1919) concerns his theory on repression and how aspects of the past erupt spontaneously to deregulate both the body and trace memory in the present.¹⁵ Psychically it is this disruption that gives rise to the uncanny rather than the thing of disgust in itself. The uncanny *unheimlich*, translated in German as unhomely stands in opposition to *heimlich* which means home. This double semantic of the *unheimlich* gives it the capacity in its ambivalence to slip into the space of the familiar. Drawing from Otto Rank's book *The Double* (1914), Freud foresaw these ruptures in the vast mechanical and technological ages as manifestations arising from the Unconscious, concerning magic, folklore and earlier childhood developmental ways of thinking. Freud cast this 'dark continent' which emerged, onto the maternal body and female sexuality. Threat in the phallogocentric order that raises individual and collective anxiety is projected onto the female body and the cradle of security, the home.

Griselda Pollock in her essay links the uncanny to the affect of art. Pollock theorises a stratum of subjectivity as co-affecting, relational and as an encounter and event.¹⁶ This theory explains how in the encounter with a painting, by being so greatly affected by its colour and gesture, we get a sensation of a psychic process that registers beyond visuality. In the moment of embodied fascination with the painting we enter a psychic

borderspace between us and the absent-presence of the painter traced through the material and gestural marks in the work. This encounter is deeply affecting.

The half-light quality of Fiona Finnegan's paintings lures the viewer through spaces of thin luminous washes of colour painted over textured ground.¹⁷ These have been repeatedly sanded with punctuating glitches and bubbles that combine to radiate back to us the light that illuminates it. The work explores the 'mono-myth, mysticism and the mysteries surrounding life and death'. In Finnegan's paintings we see cloaked figures — possibly witching or ceremonial figures, not of this time, moving collectively towards an unknown assembly for an unknown purpose. The destination in each painting is unfamiliar and unsettling whether it is the figures or us as we lurk into the canvas at a void, gap or threshold. Cast in dark half-light, this is a space of the sacred and the ritual where liminal gaps invoke mystical, magical passageways to unknown spaces and destinations. The imaginary and illusionary are invested in the borderspace of the painting, underscored by the rich materiality of the paint.

Alison Pilkington's paintings are situated between abstraction and figuration; simple half-formed shapes which are open to metaphorical and anthropomorphic interpretation.¹⁸ Pilkington explains that they 'explore how familiar yet comic images have the potential to disturb, disorientate or to be uncanny'. The drawing is very playful, and we find ourselves skipping through narratives as we encounter the work and the interconnecting words, projecting onto them stories from our own subjective and psychic significations. One can't but help project meaning onto the recurring shape and figure. Is this a benign, centaur like creature found in dark environments, or cocooned in a globular bubble as if linked in narrative to another nearby? References to paintings from different periods of art history recur and there are references to classical portraiture, landscape painting and the sublime.

Sarah Dwyer's work emerges from a struggle as she pushes and pulls the material to propose a new equilibrium of relations, reconfiguring what is present and what is absent to reinstate a new arrangement of balance and form. Through her use of old canvases or etchings the work gives a sensation of something familiar yet deeply disconcerting. Through this regeneration, Dwyer 'confronts the finality of loss while testing the temporality of now'.¹⁹ In these work we see Dwyer's more recent embrace of the body taken from intensive periods of life drawing. In the borderspace of our encounter with the painting are glimpses of protruding human flesh, limbs, a breast, a torso, all which can be read clearly yet unregulated and distorted. Dwyer 'strives to create a visual language that flickers on the edge of memory in the space where truth and invention merge. In the tradition of Lascaux, what might appear simple ultimately remains mysterious, timeless, unknowable'.

The paintings of Hannah Casey-Brogan, Sinéad Aldridge and Louise Wallace resonate particularly in tension against the tradition of Irish landscape painting. The reading of these works will situate them in relation to a third theoretical satellite in Irish visual culture, an essay by Catherine Nash. In this essay, Nash reads against the grain that might venerate Irish landscaping painting to argue that the cartography of an 'open' map in art situated in the specificities and nuances of 'place' can reimagine and reconstruct "the possibility of alternative configurations of identity."²⁰

Prevailing representations of rural Ireland — particularly the west of Ireland — in art, literature and film present a romantic rural utopian landscape of cultural inferiority, a benignly primitive Ireland, wild, untouched and feminised. Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch critically examines the use of Irish womanliness as the embodiment of rural Ireland and the nation, set against the emergence of the national hero figure, particular in the work of Paul Henry, Jack B. Yeats, Seán Keating and Charles Lamb.²¹ She positions the virgin as an important signifier in this production of meaning and identifies its ideological discourse which profit from this identification. Bhreathnach-Lynch locates the "hyper masculinities" generated and invested in this discourse and its consequences constitutionally and judicially for the women of Ireland in the new Republic.²²

Catherine Nash concurs with this when she describes the formation of “national identity in the postcolonial nation and the presence of the female subaltern” which she traces as the tension between the map and the body.²³ The cottage as depicted in the landscape paintings of Paul Henry became a phantom ideal of traditional rural life, Irish womanliness and motherhood, ultimately fixing cultural and social values and gender roles. Nash reconsiders ‘place’ and proposes that repetition of malignant binaries underpinning “masculinist and colonial discourse[s]” can be avoided without essentialist biologically determined concepts and colonial notions of the native as natural identification.²⁴ Nash argues that the remapping of identity in postcolonial Ireland and the excavation of lost meanings associated with a place name has also recovered “a lost relationship to a place” a “recovery of meaning, of history and of authenticity.”²⁵ This resonates particularly with Irish poets who have by the naming of place deployed an “evocative power” that “provides a key to the shared social memory of a landscape whose collective meanings were part of a unifying repository of community knowledge, but which have been lost through loss of the language.”²⁶ The use of Irish place names in poetry “thus enables cultural difference to be inserted into the text.”²⁷ Nash theorises that the notion of place in art creates the possibility of re-inscription and re-visioning of identity against an open and shifting map for both the feminist and postcolonial project.

‘The Third Shift’ is a series of small paintings by Hannah Casey-Brogan. Casey-Brogan’s work teeters between abstraction and landscape painting mapping its elemental curvature and form, capturing its environmental essence and invoking the shifting weather systems moving across the geographical terrain. She traverses ferocious storm systems to gentle translucent and hazy screens of light and atmosphere set against contrasting densities of land and shadow. The paintings are small in scale, determined by the domestic nature of her home/studio-based practice. ‘The Third Shift’ brings into visibility a place of creative and psychological space of rendering and processing beyond the shifts demarcated by the demands of women’s work today in the public domain and the domestic and childrearing demands in the private domain. In mapping, rendering and processing Casey-Brogan is shifting a vocabulary in relation to the land.

Sinéad Aldridge’s paintings lay out shallow muted surfaces on a background of linen stretched on board.²⁸ The paint is thinly applied in watercolour like transparencies; shapes form into blocked shades, hushed so intently that brush marks are untraceable. This sensitivity in the paint draws you closer to the surface which can be seen as a stage upon which actions and the execution of marks become manifest. Circumventing the work are the echoes of peripheral concerns — world affairs, the collective anxiety which we share, her selected reading and domestic tasks. These all play their part and cannot be separated from the work.

Material process, personal and local narrative and a connection to place are central roots in the paintings of Louise Wallace. An unease envelops these scenes including a 1970’s black bungalow shrouded in deep shadow by overbearing conifer hedging; a pond that once powered a linen mill, an unfenced ‘half-moon lake’ lamented in virtual communities as a deadly lure for local children and derelict outbuildings at the edge of Bellevue zoo. Reverberating on the canvas and emanating from within each of these sites are interwoven fragments of oral histories, local story telling and poetry.²⁹ Material processes on the surface of the canvas are an unfolding dimension in the tension held within each site and this is deeply felt when considering the work. Water fills each composition amongst these environments of casual neglect. A wilderness rises and encroaches on the crumbling industrial infrastructure. These negotiations shift and play out, in, and upon the paintings surfaces, ebbing and flowing, pushing and pulling.

The paintings of Casey-Brogan, Aldridge and Wallace stretch out a shifting, open and nuanced cartography of cultural identity more located in their specificity to places of interior processing, collective anxiety and industrial urban places all being remapped and recovered by atmosphere, a prevailing weather system, or encroaching wilderness.

This essay has endeavored to write a line through the matrix of the works in *Penumbra* to identify one constellation. As the viewer unfolds their own visual and sensory engagement they will draw other personal constellations. *Penumbra* increases the visibility of the painterly practice of women artists in, of and from the island of Ireland. The encounter with the work is an encounter with the material; time with each draws you further to consider its subjectivity and its agency. There are common resonances amongst these works where light and shadow shift across terrains. There is tension in sheeted veils; atmospheric systems press-down heavy on spaces below. Crescent forms or moons beam out, and although the prevailing mood is heavy, ruminating and uncertain, something revitalizing has been recovered.

1. Key exhibitions include [Irish Women Artists, From the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day](#) (The National Gallery of Ireland & The Douglas Hyde Gallery, 1987), [Relocating History](#) (The Fenderesky Gallery & The Orchard Gallery 1993), [Re/dressing Cathleen](#) (McMullen Museum of Art, 1997) and [Elliptical Affinities: Irish Women Artists and the Politics of the Body 1985—present](#) (Highlanes Gallery, 2019—2020).
2. Barbara Bolt. [Art Beyond Representation, The Performative Power of the Image](#). London: I.B. Tauris, 2004, p. 78.
3. Betterton, Rosemary. ‘Introduction’, in Betterton, Rosemary ed. [Unframed; Politics of Women's Contemporary Painting](#). London I.B. Tauris, 2004, p. 7.
4. Graw, Isabelle. ‘The Value of Liveliness, Painting as an Index of Agency in the New Economy.’ In Graw, Isabelle. & Lajer-Burcharth, Ewa. eds. [Painting Beyond Itself. The Medium in the Post-medium Condition](#). Sternberg Press, 2013, pp. 79—101.
5. Ibid. p. 82. The indexicality is a modification of Charles S. Pierce’s semiotic approach.
6. The discussion here is directly informed by correspondence with the artist and a statement on the work.
7. Graw, 2013, p. 86.
8. Interview with Kate Mothes, Yasmine Robinson, IN PAINTING ON 14/08/17 sourced at <https://yngspc.com/artists/2017/08/yasmine-robinson/>
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Graw, 2013, p. 85. This is a suggestion by Roberts, John. [The intangibilities of Form: Skill and Deskilling in Art after the Readymade](#). London, Verso, 2007, p. 24.
12. Graw, 2013, p. 83.
13. Ibid. p. 96.
14. Pollock, Griselda. ‘Does Art Think?’ in [Art and Thought](#). Arnold, Dana and Iversen, Margaret. eds. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003, pp. 129—155.
15. Freud, Sigmund. ‘The Uncanny’. In Freud, Sigmund. [The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological works of Sigmund Freud. Volume XVII \(1917—1919\) An Infantile Neurosis and Other works](#). London: The Hogarth Press and the institute of Psycho-analysis, pp. 219—253.
16. This is based on the theorizations of the matrixial theories of human subjectivity by Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger.
17. The discussion here is directly informed by correspondence with the artist and a statement on the work.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Nash, Catherine. “Remapping and Renaming: New Categories of Identity, Gender and Landscape in Ireland.” [Feminist Review](#). 44. Summer (1993): p. 54.
21. Bhreathnach-Lynch, Sighe, “Landscape, space and gender: their role in the construction of female identity in newly independent Ireland” in [Gendering Landscape Art](#). ed. Steven Adams & Anna Gruetzner Robins. Manchester: Manchester Press, 2000, pp. 76—86.
22. Bhreathnach-Lynch, Sighe. “Commemorating the hero in newly independent Ireland: expressions of nationhood in bronze and stone.” [Images, Icons & the Irish National Imagination](#). Lawrence W. Mc Bride. ed. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999, pp. 148—165.
23. Nash, Catherine. “Remapping and Renaming: New Categories of Identity, Gender and Landscape in Ireland.” [Feminist Review](#). 44. Summer (1993): p. 39.
24. Nash, (1993) p. 50.
25. Ibid. p. 51.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. The discussion here is directly informed by correspondence with the artist and a statement on the work.
29. Ibid.

Sinéad Aldridge

Head Stone

2018, Oil on linen on board, 30 x 25cm



Sinéad Aldridge
In The Philosopher's Garden
2018, Oil on linen on board, 30 x 25cm



Hannah Casey-Brogan

The Third Shift

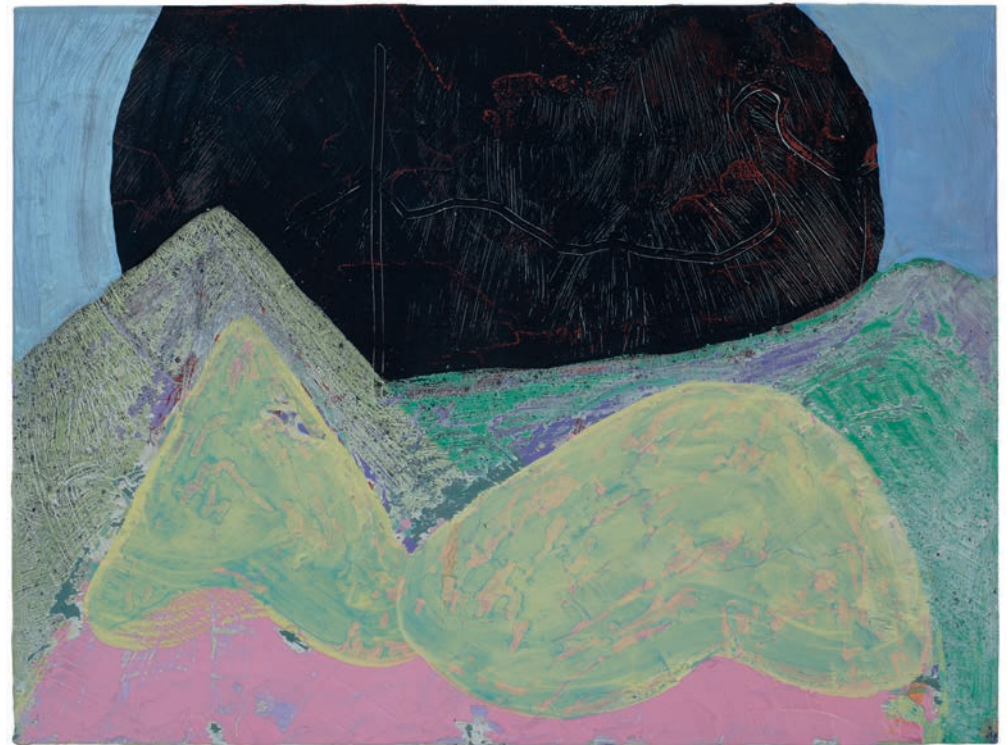
2019—2020, Oil on aluminium, 15 x 20cm



Hannah Casey-Brogan

The Third Shift

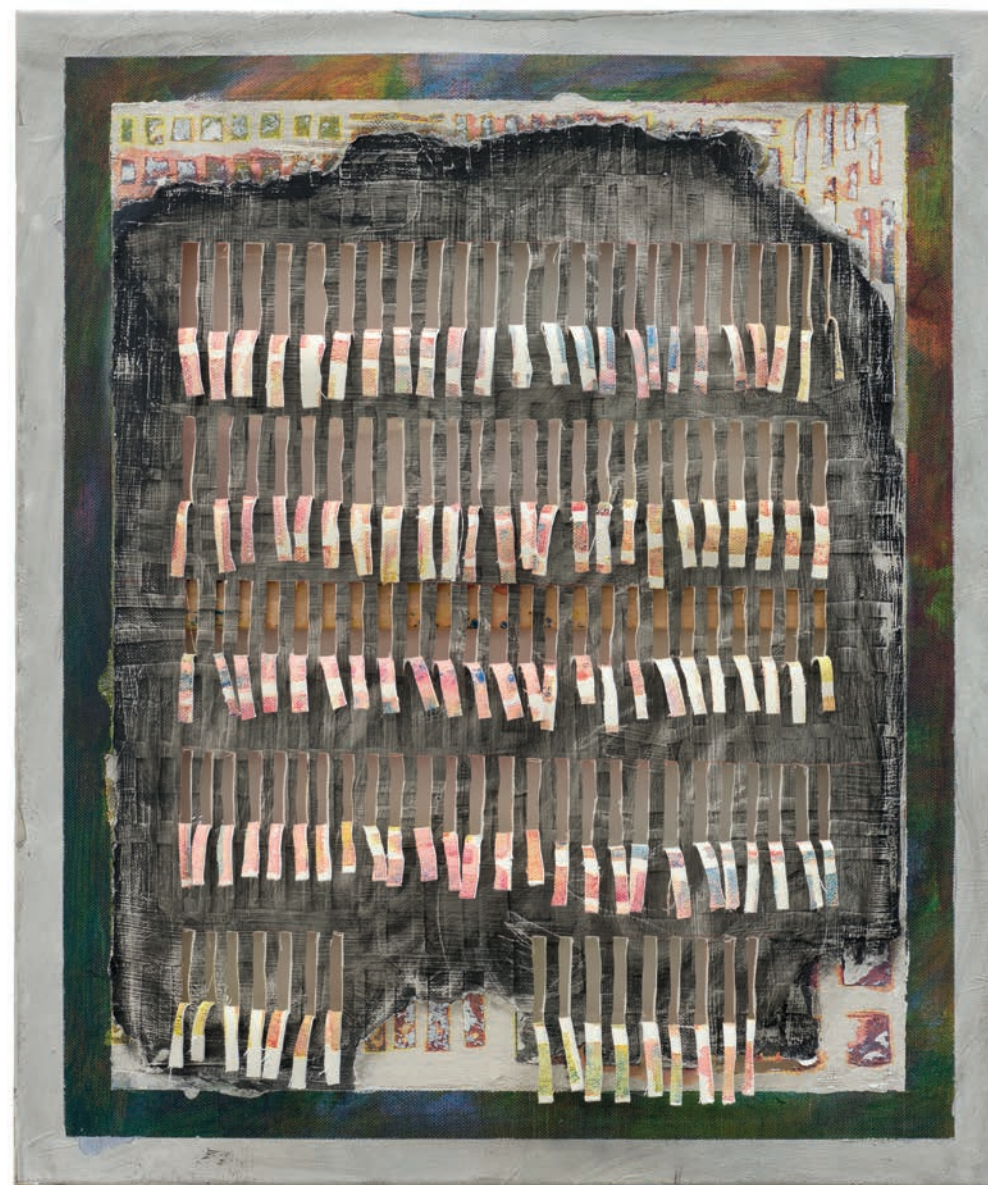
2019—2020, Oil on aluminium, 15 x 20cm



Susan Connolly

over+over&over

2019—2020, Site specific painting intervention, CYM process paint,
canvas, steel and wooden supports,
200 x 180 x 150cm, 120 x 150cm, 30 x 40cm, various wall sizes



Susan Connolly

over+over&over

2019—2020, Site specific painting intervention, CYM process paint,
canvas, steel and wooden supports,
200 x 180 x 150cm, 120 x 150cm, 30 x 40cm, various wall sizes



Sarah Dwyer

Ligonier

2019, Charcoal, pastel, and watercolor on somerset paper, 55.9 x 38.1cm



Sarah Dwyer
Open Field
2019, Oil on linen, 132 x 101cm



Fiona Finnegan

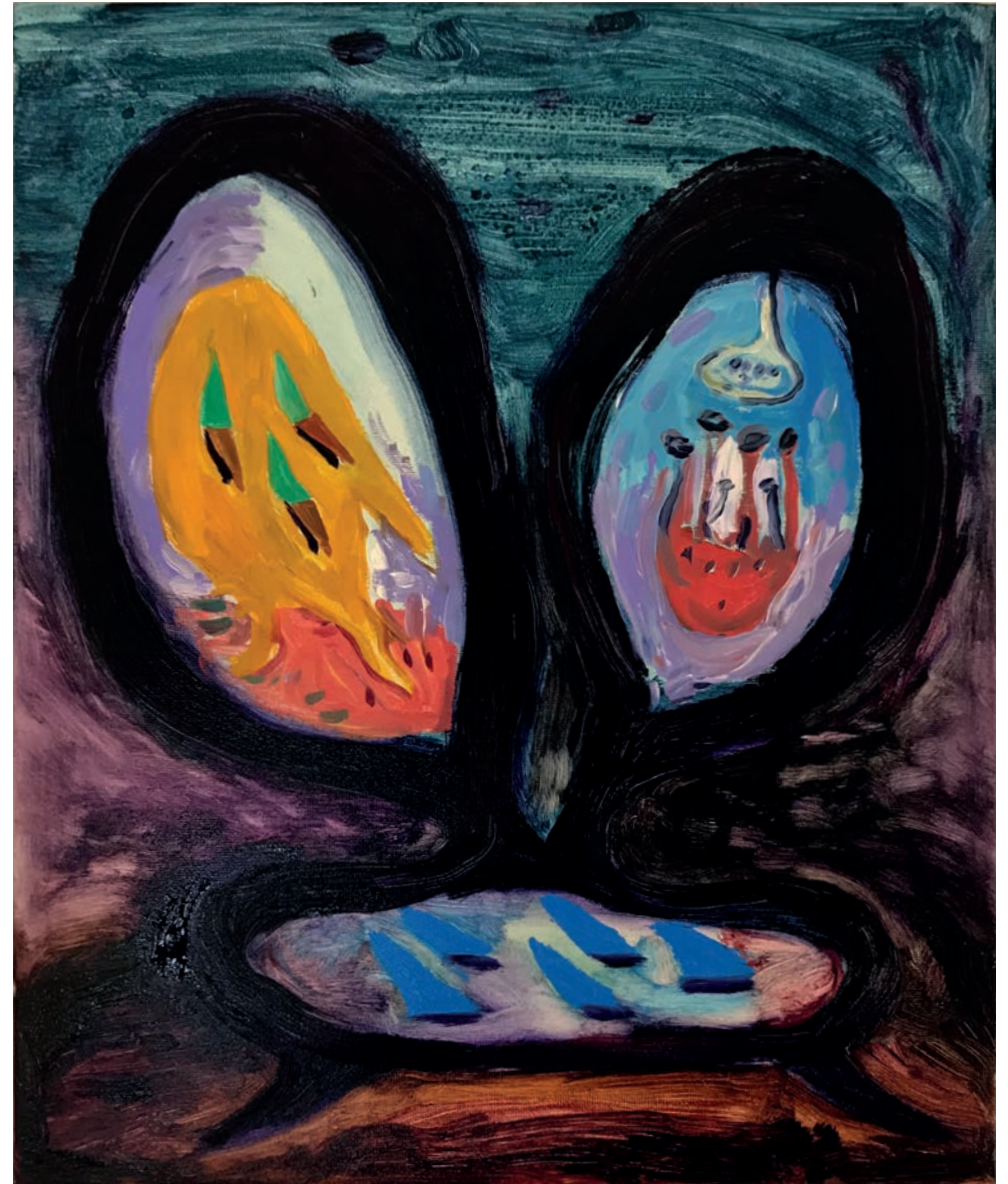
Deep Inside The Amethyst Mine
2019, Oil on wood, 150 x 100cm



Fiona Finnegan
Take Me Somewhere Nice
2018, Oil on wood, 64 x 50cm



Alison Pilkington
Little Hollow So Bright
2019, Oil on canvas, 30 x 25cm



Alison Pilkington
A Little Hollow
2019, Oil on canvas, 50 x 40cm



Yasmine Robinson

Febly

2018, Multimedia painting on canvas, 230 x 150cm



Louise Wallace
False Spring
2019, Oil on canvas, 40 x 30cm



Louise Wallace
The Fetch Length
2019, Oil on canvas, 44 x 38cm



BIOGRAPHIES

SINÉAD ALDRIDGE

Sinéad Aldridge is originally from Belfast and is currently based between Berlin & Co Sligo. She studied Fine Art at Camberwell College of Art, London receiving a BA Hons degree in Painting (1985), the D.A.A.D scholarship Karlsruhe Kunstakademie Germany (1986) & MA in Visual Arts Practices IADT, Dublin (2010). Recent solo exhibitions include *the sky is falling*, Fenderesky Gallery, Belfast (2019); *after image*, Fenderesky Gallery, Belfast (2015); *unattainable/joy*, RHA, Dublin (2010); *Works & Days*, Sligo Art Gallery (2008); *Penumbra*, The Dock, Carrick-on-Shannon (2006); *New Work*, Fenderesky Gallery, Belfast (2007, 2003); *Fast Time*, The Model Gallery, Sligo (2002).

Selected group exhibitions include: *Take Place*, Institut für Alles Mögliche, Berlin (2019); *Art Spring*, Berlin (2019); *Beep*, Wales Painting Biennale (2018, 2016); *Die Sprache ist das Haus in dem wir leben* Künstlerverein Malkasten, Düsseldorf (2012); *Pirate Capital Public Gesture*, The Lab, Dublin (2010); *Accrochage Gorizia*, Italy (2010); *Occasion*, Fenderesky Gallery, Belfast (2009); *Out Of Context*, Contemporary Irish Painting, Archeus Gallery, London (2004); *Irish Contemporary Art*, Galleri Weinburger, Copenhagen (1999).

Aldridge has received awards including the Arts Council of Ireland bursary (2004, 1993), Northern Ireland Film Council (1994). Residencies include, Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus Schwandorf Germany (2017) Ballinglen Arts Foundation (2002), Maze Prison Belfast (1998), Artist Work Programme I.M.M.A (1997). She received the Íontas Prize for painting (1996). Her work is held in public collections Northern Ireland Arts Council, Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Boyle Civic Art Collection, Co Monaghan V.E.C, Mayo Co. Council, National University Galway.

HANNAH CASEY-BROGAN

Hannah Casey-Brogan is a painter from Belfast, where she continues to live and work. She holds a First-Class Honours degree in Fine Art (2007) in addition to two Masters degrees in Embroidery (2009) and Painting (2015, with distinction) from The University of Ulster, Belfast School of Art.

Recent exhibitions include the solo show *Shortest Path*, The Ulster University Art Gallery (2018) and *LOTS*, Platform Arts (2016). Recent group shows including *Artist in Residence Show*, Fusetsu Gallery (2015); *Out of the Ordinary*, The Naughton Gallery (2014); *Notes and Volcanoes*, Catalyst Arts (2009). She has also shown internationally in Berlin, Paris, New York, Reykjavik, and Kofu City, Japan, with shows including *Occasional Gale*, SÍM House (2011); *TOTEMS*, tt gallery (2013).

Casey-Brogan has received awards from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and The British Council to travel on artist residencies including SÍM and NES (Iceland), AIR-Y (Japan), and The Curfew Tower, (Northern Ireland). Casey-Brogan received The Alice Berger Hammerschlag Award (2014) and was nominated for New Sensations 2014 at the Saatchi Gallery, London.

SUSAN CONNOLLY

Susan Connolly is an artist originally from Kildare and now based between Belfast and Waterford. She is a graduate of Limerick School of Art and Design, she holds an MFA from the University of Ulster, a first class honours MA from ACW at NCAD, Dublin and her PhD from Ulster University for which she was awarded the VC Scholarship.

Recent exhibitions include solo shows at Kunsthaus Dalhem, Berlin (2020), Platform Arts, Belfast (2018), The Lab, Dublin (2015), dlrLexicon, Dublin (2015), and The MAC, Belfast (2014). Group exhibitions include *Paint-ing*, Draiocht, Dublin (2019); *After an Act*, The Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast (2018); *Peripheries 2017*, Gorey School of Art (2017); *Veins*, The Molesworth Gallery, Dublin (2016); *What Is, and What Might be*, Highlanes Gallery, Drogheda (2015); *ArtBox*, Dublin (2014); *The Trouble with Painting*, The Pumphouse Gallery, London (2014); *Essays for the House of Memory*, Ormston House (2013), Limerick; *Three Degrees of Painting*, Solstice Arts Centre, Navan (2013).

Connolly has received awards including Culture Ireland Funding (2019); Arts Funding, Kildare County Council (2019); The Golden Foundation, New York (2017); WARP artist residency, Belgium (2010); Arts Council of Ireland, Travel and Training Award (2009); DCR Guesthouse Residency, Den Haag, Holland (2009).

SARAH DWYER

Sarah Dwyer is from Cork and currently lives and works in London. She has a Master's in Painting from the Royal College of Art, London (2004). She also has a Masters in Fine Art from Staffordshire University (2001). She previously studied Environmental Economics at York University & The University of Illinois and worked in research in this field in Paris for the European Society of Ecological Economics.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Tink* (2019) and *Sunk Under* (2015), Jane Lombard Gallery, New York; *Whip-poor-whill*, Josh Lilley Gallery, London (2014), Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Dublin (2011). Group exhibitions include *Stains on a Decade*, Josh Lilley Gallery, London (2019); *Out There Out Where*, Boston Manor House, London (2018); *The John Moores Painting Prize*, The Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (2016); *New Order: British Art Today*, The Saatchi Gallery, London (2014).

Dwyer was a shortlisted artist for the John Moore's Painting Prize (2016) and the Celeste Art Prize (2006). She has received awards including the Daiwa Foundation Travel Award (2007) The Sheldon Bergh Award, Royal College of Art (2004) and the Basil Alkazzi Travel Award to New York, Royal College of Art (2004). Dwyer has undertaken several artist residencies including printmaking at the University of Ulster, University of Hertfordshire and more recently a Body and Place residency at Owlpen Manor House in the UK. She has also curated several exhibitions in the UK over the past 15 years. She has works in private and public collections in Europe, the USA & Japan.

FIONA FINNEGAN

Fiona Finnegan is a painter originally from Newry, who graduated with an MFA with distinction from Ulster University (2009) and is currently living and working in Belfast. She received a BA Hons in Music and Visual Practice (2001) at the University of Brighton.

Recent solo exhibitions include *The Frog Devoured The Sun* at the University of Ulster Gallery, Belfast (2017) and at Domobaal, London (2018). Group shows include *Waking the Witch*, a touring exhibition supported by Arts Council England (2018/2019); *Creekside Open* at A.P.T Gallery London (2017, selected by Jordan Baseman) and the *Creekside Open* (2017, selected by Alison Wilding); *The Surreal in Irish Art*, F.E. Mc William Gallery, Banbridge and The Highlanes Gallery, Drogheda (2011). Finnegan was selected for The Threadneedle Prize Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London (2010). Her paintings are included in the public collections of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the University of Ulster, Belfast.

ALISON PILKINGTON

Alison Pilkington is a painter originally from Sligo who currently lives and works in Dublin. She completed a practice led PhD in painting at National College Art and Design, Dublin (2015).

Recent solo exhibitions include: *How We Roam*, The Dock, Carrick on Shannon (2018) and RHA Ashford Gallery, Dublin (2018); *Will We Remember Volcanoes*, Westminster Art Library, London (2017). Recent group exhibitions include *Paint The Gloom Away*, Terrace Gallery, London (2020); *Mountain Size*, Pineapple Gallery, Middlesbrough (2019); *Contemporary British Painting*, touring exhibition to 4 Museums in China, (Sept 2017 to January 2018); *Strangelands*, Collyer Bristow Gallery, London (2017); Royal Academy Summer Show, London (2016); *Slippery and Amorphous*—Contemporary Painting Group Show, Marylebone Crypt Gallery, Marylebone, London (2016); *Sluice*, Art Helix, New York (2016); *Spectrum*, Herrick Gallery Mayfair (2016).

In 2012 Pilkington was awarded a British Institution Award for painting at the Royal Academy Summer Show London. She has been selected for the Marmite Painting Prize, London (2012, 2016). She was 3rd prizewinner at the Artslant International Jurors Award (2013). Pilkington was shortlisted for the Kurt Beers *100 Painters of Tomorrow* publication (2013).

YASMINE ROBINSON

Yasmine Robinson is originally from Derry, Co. Londonderry and currently lives and works in London. She received a First Class Honours degree in Fine Art, Ulster University, Belfast (2017). She was awarded a Distinction in her Masters of Fine Art, Chelsea College of Art, London (2018).

Recent exhibitions include *Absinthe*, Collective Ending, Spit and Sawdust, London (2019); *Young Gods* Charlie Smith Gallery, London (2019); *Studio Makers Prize*, Tiffany&Co. Convent Garden, London (2018); *& Another Angle*, Maxilla Space, London (2018); *Emergence*, QSS Belfast, (2017); *FRAMEWORK*, Belfast (2017); RDS Visual Arts Awards, Dublin (2017); Duncairn Cultural Arts Centre, Belfast (2016).

Robinson has been the recipient of awards including Tiffany & Co. Outset Studio Makers Prize (2018) and RDS Visual Arts Award 2017. In 2017 she was awarded the Frank Bowling Scholarship to support her studies at Chelsea College of Art.

LOUISE WALLACE

Louise Wallace is a Belfast painter who continues to live and work in the city. She received a First Class honours degree in Fine Art from Belfast School of Art (2002) and went on to complete her PhD there (2006) having been awarded the Vice Chancellor's Research Studentship.

Recent solo exhibitions include *The Glutted Look of Clouds*, Fenderesky Gallery, Belfast (2016) and *Chasing Ghosts*, Fenderesky Gallery, Belfast (2005). Recent group exhibitions include *How The Image Echoes 1 & 2*, University of Ulster Gallery (2020), PS² Gallery, Belfast (2019); *Houses Are Like Birds*, Fenderesky Gallery, Belfast (2019); *Fully Awake*, House For An Art Lover, Glasgow (2017); *Winter Open*, Rua Red Gallery, Dublin (2014); *Convergence 2014*, 3C Creative Mall, Beijing (2014); *Intimate Revolution*, Siemens Art Space, Beijing (2012); *Contemporary Art in Northern Ireland*, Parliament Buildings, Belfast (2011); *15th Annual Juried Exhibition*, Soho20 Gallery New York (2010, curated by Phong Bui).

Wallace was awarded the British Airways Student Travel Prize (2001) and the Support for The Individual Artist award, Arts Council of Northern Ireland (2007, 2005). Her work is in the public collections of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Boyle Civic Collection, Sligo. Her essay *'Who Killed Marthe Bonnard? Madness, Morbidity and Pierre Bonnard's The Bath'* was published in the Journal of Contemporary Painting (2018).

LIST OF WORKS

Sinéad Aldridge

In The Philosopher's Garden

2018, Oil on linen on board, 30 x 25cm

Head Stone

2018, Oil on linen on board, 30 x 25cm

Dark Forest

2018, Oil on linen on board, 40 x 50cm

Sermon to Stones

2018, Oil on linen on board, 25 x 30cm

Small Landscape With Figure

2019, Oil on linen on board, 30 x 25cm

Hannah Casey-Brogan

The Third Shift

2019—2020, Oil on aluminium, 15 x 20cm each

Susan Connolly

over+over&over

2019—2020, Site specific painting intervention, CYM process paint, canvas, steel and wooden supports, 200 x 180 x 150cm, 120 x 150cm, 30 x 40cm, various wall sizes

Sarah Dwyer

Rime

2019, Oil and charcoal on linen, 132 x 101cm

Ow/pen Field

2019, Oil on linen, 132 x 101cm

Long Sole Sound

2017, Oil on linen, 186 x 132cm

Ligonier

2019, Charcoal, pastel, and watercolor on somerset paper, 55.9 x 38.1cm

Sew Rib

2020, Charcoal, pastel, and watercolor on somerset paper, 55.9 x 38.1cm

Oddments

2020, Charcoal, pastel, and watercolor on somerset paper, 55.9 x 38.1cm

Fiona Finnegan

Deep Inside The Amethyst Mine

2019, Oil on wood, 150 x 100cm

Avalon

2019, Oil on wood, 50 x 40cm

How Vacantly You Gaze At Me

2019, Oil on wood, 80 x 58cm

Take Me Somewhere Nice

2018, Oil on wood, 64 x 50cm

Alison Pilkington

A Little Hollow

2019, Oil on canvas, 50 x 40cm

Little Hollow So Bright

2019, Oil on canvas, 30 x 25cm

Monument

2012, Oil on canvas, 150 x 120cm

Diagram Painting

2018, Oil on canvas, 180 x 200cm

Yasmine Robinson

Febly

2018, Multimedia painting on canvas, 230 x 150cm

Kirk

2019, Multimedia painting and embroidery on moquette, 20 x 20cm

I Will Never Own a Pot Plant

2019, Oil, soft pastel, batik and embroidery on canvas, 40 x 45cm

Louise Wallace

Glengoland Crescent

2019, Oil on canvas, pine wood, acrylic paint, 76 x 112cm

False Spring

2019, Oil on canvas, 40 x 30cm

The Fetch Length

2019, Oil on canvas, 44 x 38cm

Pond Life

2019, Oil on canvas, found wood, pine wood, acrylic paint, 44 x 38cm

Pond (After) Life

2020, Oil on canvas, found wood, pine wood, acrylic paint, 44 x 38cm

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Hannah Casey-Brogan
Susan Connolly
Sarah Dwyer
Fiona Finnegan
Alison Pilkington
Yasmine Robinson
Louise Wallace

The Programming Committee of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio:
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Anne Stewart, Deirdre Quail, Chris Hobson, Dougal McKenzie, Brian Johnston,
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Domobaaal Gallery London
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PENUMBRA

15 February — 30 May 2020

Curated by Dr Riann Coulter + Dr Louise Wallace

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